

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

September 20, 2019

Members Present

Michael Ash
Manny Atwood
Sherry Bates
Tim Fitzgibbon

Katie Mulholland
Mark Putnam
Herman Quirmbach
Doug Shull

Emily Stork
Jeremy Varner
Cindy Winckler

Members Absent

Cassandra Bond
Cecil Dolecheck

Tim Kraayenbrink
Barbara Sloniker

AG Present

Emily Willits

Staff Present

Victoria Archer
Todd Brown
Prasanna Bujimalla
Jennifer Christensen
Tressa Glass

Karmon Long
Elizabeth Medina
Karen Misjak
Julie Ntem
Christina Sibaouih

Carolyn Small
Nathan Svare
Erin Valerio-Garsow
Mark Wiederspan
Graci Zeiger

Guests Present

Gary Adams	Iowa Student Loan
Carissa Bailey	Ottumwa High School Alumna /GEAR UP Iowa 1.0 Recipient
Kathryn Baker	Department of Administrative Services
Angie Carlson	Capri College
Jasmine Dao	East High School GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 Student
David Epley	House Democratic Staff
Amber Miller	Roosevelt High School GEAR UP Coach
Christine Nguyen	Lincoln High School GEAR UP Coach
Samisha Powel	East High School GEAR UP Coach
John Preston	Hoover High School GEAR UP Coach
Nyaniet Prok	East High School GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 Student
Amalia Riordan	North High School GEAR UP Coach

Call to Order

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission met for a regularly scheduled meeting on September 20, 2019, at the Commission's Office, 475 SW 5th Street, Suite D, Des Moines, IA. Commission Chair Mulholland called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Misjak said the 2019 Iowa State Fair message focused on the "College Changes Everything" theme. Children participated in a version of corn kernel voting by selecting how college will change their lives. Questions about the Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship and Future Ready Iowa Grant were popular.

Ms. Misjak shared that the Course to College Corps is entering its third year. AmeriCorps members have been placed in 23 participating high schools to provide direct support services to students as they navigate the college application and enrollment process. This year, the program expanded to allow high school seniors to serve as near-peer mentors. Additional AmeriCorps members have been added in seven community colleges to support Last-Dollar Scholarship recipients.

Ms. Misjak said the Course to College mini grants were offered to partner sites to help high schools participate in Course to College activities such as college application or FAFSA completion events. Applications for these mini grants closed on September 17.

Ms. Misjak announced GEAR UP Iowa is in Year 6, but planning for the Year 7 transition to college is already underway. Nine partner colleges will provide supports to GEAR UP students on campus during their first year of college. She reminded the Commission that GEAR UP Iowa serves underrepresented, predominantly first-generation students.

Ms. Misjak said National GEAR UP Week is September 23-27, 2019. GEAR UP Iowa schools hold events for students and families in order to encourage involvement in college planning. Ms. Misjak added that GEAR UP Iowa staff have developed reports for partner schools that display the impact of the services provided during the course of the grant. The reports are intended to help schools and staff identify the efficacy of events and services.

Ms. Misjak introduced Christina Sibaouih, Division Administrator and GEAR UP Iowa Project Director. Ms. Sibaouih invited the GEAR UP Iowa team and their guests to introduce themselves. The GEAR UP Iowa guests included the five GEAR UP Iowa Coaches for Des Moines Public Schools: Amber Miller, Christine Nguyen, Samisha Powel, John Preston and Amalia Riordan; two GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 students from North

High School: Jasmine Dao and Nyaniet Prok; and one GEAR UP Iowa 1.0 alumna from Ottumwa: Carissa Bailey.

Ms. Medina described the process used to select the Youth Leadership Summit participants. She played a video, which introduced and shared the experiences of the four students chosen to represent GEAR UP Iowa at the Youth Leadership Summit in San Francisco last summer. Ms. Misjak added that the Youth Leadership Summit is an excellent experience that provides life-changing opportunities for participants.

Ms. Misjak said the GEAR UP Iowa Advisory Council will meet on October 3 to finalize Year 6 planning and continue Year 7 planning.

Impact of GEAR UP in Des Moines Public Schools

Mr. Svare introduced the GEAR UP Iowa Coaches working in the Des Moines Public Schools. He highlighted the successes the Coaches have enjoyed in building relationships with district employees and community supports.

Ms. Miller described the ACT test preparation and testing process at Roosevelt High School. She shared that average scores from pre-ACT to ACT test increased 2.4 points. In response to a question from Senator Quirnbach, Ms. Miller advised that sophomores and juniors were offered scholarships to cover the cost of taking PSAT exams but that the cohort would not take the PSAT as seniors. Senator Quirnbach noted that practice with these tests is critical to learn the discipline of testing under constraints, and that the PSAT is required for National Merit Scholarship consideration.

Mr. Svare discussed the "Check & Connect" mentoring model. GEAR UP Iowa Coaches use the process to help students who are close to college-ready gain the proficiencies they need.

Mr. Preston explained the processes GEAR UP Iowa coaches have used to take GEAR UP Iowa students on college and career visits. He said an average of 23% of the cohort have gone on college visits, with a majority of those attending two colleges. Mr. Preston added that business tours and DMACC Career Discovery Days were included to allow the cohort to explore career options.

Ms. Powell spoke on the actions GEAR UP Iowa Coaches have used to boost family engagement. In response to a question from Senator Quirnbach, Ms. Powell defined family engagement as family participation and attendance at GEAR UP Iowa events. She described how she has worked to reduce language barriers around event communications at East High School, and how events are scheduled during hours that are

easily attended by working parents. Ms. Powell highlighted the Family Nights held at East High School. Each Family Night covers a specific college preparation topic, such as financial aid, FAFSA night, or scholarships. Family Night events will be held at each high school this fall.

Ms. Powell explained that GEAR UP Iowa students and their families assisted in the planning of the Big Dream Gathering held in August before school started. Ms. Dao described her experiences planning the event through the summer. Ms. Prok shared that the event allowed attendees to cover the walls of the school with their dreams. Through the event, she was able to gain access to educators who helped her define steps to her career. Ms. Powell added that 199 students and family members attended the Big Dream Gathering. Ms. Misjak expressed her appreciation for the success of the event, noting the diversity of the attendees and the colleges represented. In response to a question from Commissioner Bates, Ms. Powell said the team hopes the Big Dream Gathering will become an annual event. She added the Big Dream Gathering was traditionally a college event and this was the first time it had been done for high school students.

Ms. Riordan described the general coach mentoring activities and the process for personalizing the services to the needs of the cohort. She gave the example of GEAR UP Ambassadors. They are student representatives who provide feedback to allow adaptation of program offerings to the needs of the cohort. Student buy-in has increased as their feedback has been accepted. During the coming year, some GEAR UP Ambassadors will become the AmeriCorps volunteers providing near-peer mentoring to their classmates. Ms. Nguyen said many students do not know where to start. Meeting with students one-on-one helps them find answers to their questions and find their path.

Ms. Bailey shared that GEAR UP Iowa 1.0 was instrumental to her college success. As a first-generation, low-income student, the price of college was intimidating for her and her family. Her GEAR UP advocate became instrumental to her success. She is now assisting younger generations of her family as they prepare for college. Ms. Bailey said GEAR UP Iowa opened opportunities for her and put her on a different life path than she would have otherwise had. Senator Quirmbach asked if Ms. Bailey was part of the first GEAR UP Iowa class. Ms. Bailey verified that she was.

Ms. Misjak explained the first GEAR UP Iowa grant was awarded in 2008 and the cohort graduated in 2014. She added the grant was a 6-year grant and the students did not receive supports beyond the scholarship after graduation. GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 is different in that services will be provided through their first year of college. Ms. Misjak shared that GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 college involvement is larger than other state grants. There is hope

the GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 program will become a model for other GEAR UP federal grants in the future.

Ms. Misjak thanked the GEAR UP Iowa Coaches, students and alumna for speaking.

Representative Winckler verified that the GEAR UP Iowa Coaches are promoting other Iowa College Aid assistance programs. She added that the Education Appropriations Committee needs to review the return on investment for programs like GEAR UP Iowa and that we need to fund the administrative costs through appropriations.

Ms. Misjak indicated that GEAR UP Iowa is tracking services to demonstrate the impact of GEAR UP Iowa services, with the hope of funding the GEAR UP program for every school in Iowa. Ms. Sibaouih added that a proposal is being submitted to bolster research on the efficacy of GEAR UP Iowa 1.0 services.

In response to a question from Senator Quirnbach, Ms. Sibaouih explained that the Iowa Department of Education has provided a comparison cohort of students who are not participating in GEAR UP Iowa programming. Mr. Wiederspan explained different options for data comparison between the GEAR UP Iowa schools and the control cohort.

Ms. Sibaouih answered a question from Senator Quirnbach, explaining that referrals to existing programs are made when possible and programming gaps are identified. Senator Quirnbach added that comparative lessons will bolster the product results. Commissioner Bates asked if there is a comparison between urban and rural due to the difference in population experiences. Senator Quirnbach asked if rural schools were served by GEAR UP Iowa. Ms. Sibaouih explained that four of the twelve GEAR UP Iowa districts are larger, urban schools while the remaining eight are smaller and more rural.

Commissioner Mulholland thanked the guests for attending and speaking.

Meeting Minutes

Motion: Commissioner Shull moved to approve the July 19, 2019, Meeting Minutes as written. Commissioner Bates seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Administrative Rules

Mr. Brown introduced the motion to adopt the amendments to the Administrative Rules and recommended they move forward as a group. He noted there have been no changes from the version presented to the Commission during the July 2019 Commission Meeting.

Representative Winckler asked if the approval of the Administrative Rules was more of a formality at this point. Mr. Brown verified the motion is to adopt the rules.

Motion: Commissioner Ash moved to adopt amendments to the following Administrative Rules:

- Chapter 8— "All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship"
- Chapter 20—"National Guard Educational Assistance Program"
- Chapter 23—"Skilled Workforce Shortage Tuition Grant"
- Chapter 37—"Student Loan Debt Collection"

Commissioner Putnam seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Education Training Voucher Contract Extension

Mr. Brown explained the request to authorize the Executive Director to execute the fourth and final extension to the Education Training Voucher (ETV) agreement with the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS). This agreement provides grants to youths who age out of the Iowa foster care system. The Commission has handled the administration and distribution of funds for this program since the mid-2000s. In exchange, DHS pays all administrative expenses for the program.

Senator Quirnbach asked how the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship and ETV program interact. Mr. Brown said students are allowed to receive funds from both as long as the total grant assistance does not exceed the cost of attendance. Senator Quirnbach verified that the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship is used in Iowa only.

In response to a question from Representative Winckler, Mr. Brown explained the ETV program is funded from the federal Chafee Grant that is received by DHS. It provides wraparound services to individuals aged out of Iowa foster care. Representative Winckler asked if staff were in contact with the CASA foster care advocates. Mr. Brown will check into it.

Motion: Commissioner Bates moved to authorize the Executive Director to extend the agreement with the Iowa Department of Human Services for the administration of the Education Training Voucher (ETV) for the 10/1/2019 to 9/30/2020 term. Commissioner Ash seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 Scholarship Disbursement of Funds

Mr. Brown said the recommended action is to authorize staff to draw down up to \$105,000 from the Bankers Trust GEAR UP 2.0 Scholarship account. This would allow staff to award scholarships to GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 graduates attending college in the 2019-20 academic year. Mr. Brown stated the 2019-20 academic year represents the scheduled senior year for GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 students but some have graduated early. He said the drawdown amount requested would allow staff to award full-time, maximum scholarship awards to up to 90 GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 students attending college during the fall and spring semesters.

Motion: Commissioner Putnam moved to authorize staff to draw down up to \$105,000 from the Bankers Trust GEAR UP 2.0 Scholarship account for GEAR UP 2.0 early high school graduates attending college in 2019-20. Commissioner Atwood seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Texting Vendor Agreement

Ms. Sibaouih said the recommended action to authorize the Executive Director to execute a master agreement with the recommended respondent for a texting service vendor was intentionally vague. Ms. Sibaouih explained a portion of funding for the Future Ready Iowa mentoring component was designated for a texting service. The service will provide a means to connect recipients of the Last-Dollar Scholarship and Future Ready Iowa Grant with reminders about deadlines and requirements and to begin mentoring interactions.

Ms. Sibaouih introduced Kathryn Baker from Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Central Procurement Bureau for additional details. Ms. Baker said the evaluation of RFP respondents has been completed and one met the minimum technical score. Ms. Baker advised the name of the vendor cannot be announced until the Intent to Award is published; and the Intent to Award cannot be published without permission to execute the master agreement. Ms. Baker said the annual cost of the agreement would be \$22,500, or \$135,000 over the course of the 6-year agreement. Ms. Sibaouih added the agreement would be for a one-year term with the option to renew for five additional one-year terms.

Senator Quirnbach asked if the funding was coming from another agency rather than out of the Commission budget. Ms. Sibaouih verified this was accurate. Commissioner Mulholland asked if the vendor name could be announced upon approval. Ms. Baker advised she cannot announce the name of the winning vendor until after all of the

vendors have been notified of the Intent to Award. Senator Quirmbach asked if Ms. Baker could assure the Commission that the vendor was reliable. Ms. Baker said she could not verify this. She stated the vendor had been in business for many years. From the information received, the vendor appears to be a viable organization. Commissioner Mulholland asked if the risk was one year. Ms. Baker replied the contract can be terminated immediately if the vendor is not providing the services being purchased.

Ms. Willits advised that the Attorney General's office worked with DAS to create the terms and conditions. Ms. Baker added this agreement would be for a license, and fees would be paid up-front once per year. If the vendor does not fulfil the terms of the agreement, the portion of the license fee not used will be refunded.

Commissioner Ash asked who would access the texting platform to send the texts. Ms. Sibaouih said a dedicated staff member whose position is funded through the same source will create texts and ensure consistency of messaging to students and the tie-ins to colleges across Iowa. Ms. Sibaouih added that the messaging would be statewide, to any student who is potentially receiving or has received the Last-Dollar Scholarship or Future Ready Iowa Grant. Ms. Misjak added that Iowa Code requires this service be offered.

Commissioner Ash asked what messages were sent to scholarship recipients. Ms. Sibaouih advised of the process students used to opt in to messaging during their financial aid award acceptance. The first message thanked the students for signing up and advised they would have access to additional support and mentoring as a recipient of the Last-Dollar Scholarship or Future Ready Iowa Grant. Additional messaging based on the student's college and program will be developed to enhance persistence, and the student will eventually be matched with a career-specific mentor, in partnership with Volunteer Iowa. Ms. Sibaouih explained seven of the community colleges opted to have members in place that will help with consistent messaging.

Motion: Commissioner Shull moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute a master agreement with recommended respondent for a texting service vendor. Commissioner Stork seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mulholland noted the novelty of asking the Commission to approve an action based on such limited information, but the assurance that the agreement can be terminated before the end of the term if the vendor fails limits the risk.

Staff Reports

Ms. Small provided a report on Postsecondary Registration Approvals, Exemption and SARA approvals, and provided a list of Exemption Applications currently under review. Senator Quirmbach asked if the Antioch School of Leadership Development was related to Antioch University. Ms. Small explained this is an Iowa-based, private, not-for-profit, accredited school of religious study and is independent of Antioch University.

Ms. Small discussed changes in the regulatory landscape over the last nine years, highlighting the types of schools the Commission registers and oversees. Ms. Small noted regulation previously focused on registration, and parts of oversight law were not enforced. She said the focus is moving toward oversight of non-degree technical schools.

Senator Quirmbach asked if Stanford University would have to register in order to offer a course in Iowa. Ms. Small explained the requirements that would trigger the registration requirement.

Senator Quirmbach suggested Commissioners view a film called "Failed State," a documentary on for-profit colleges.

Mr. Wiederspan delivered a report on FAFSA filing in Iowa. He noted this report is a global view of filing trends during the first eight months of the FAFSA cycle. Mr. Wiederspan said there has been a slow decline in FAFSA filing, although the reason is uncertain.

Senator Quirmbach noted that the Future Ready Iowa initiative is intended to increase the FAFSA filing rate. Representative Winckler suggested reviewing the number of school counselors. Commissioner Ash asked if the 2019-20 information covered a full year. Mr. Wiederspan explained that the report focused on the first eight months of the FAFSA cycle, as does the comparison data.

Mr. Wiederspan provided data points demonstrating schools with higher student-to-counselor ratios have lower FAFSA completion rates. Senator Quirmbach summarized that counselors matter. Commissioner Atwood noted that schools in the southwest corner of Iowa lack counselors. Commissioner Mulholland said when the data are considered, FAFSA completion numbers are more than one person's responsibility.

Representative Winckler noted that the level of free and reduced-price lunches lowers schools' income from fees. She suggested investigating how this affects at-risk funding policies. Senator Quirmbach said many states adjust funding formulas to provide extra money for low-income population schools.

Mr. Wiederspan announced "Assessing the Future: College Readiness, Access & Affordability in Iowa," a conference being held in partnership with the Iowa Educational Research and Evaluation Association. The event will be November 20, 2019, at the FFA Enrichment Center near the Des Moines Area Community College Ankeny Campus. Ms. Misjak said invitations would be sent soon.

Ms. Bujimalla provided the final FY19 financials, as well as an update on the FY20 financials through August 2019. Commissioner Fitzgibbon pointed out the August 2019 revenue for the Great Lakes payment was for July only rather than July and August. Commissioner Ash asked about the budgetary difference with postsecondary fees. Ms. Bujimalla explained that the registration invoices are sent in June to be received in July, although the total is distributed mathematically across the months. Ms. Misjak added that these are the fees paid by institutions for registering in Iowa. Commissioner Putnam explained that this presentation provides a standard basis for explaining the flow rather than predicting the flow for each item.

Audit and Finance Committee Report

Commissioner Fitzgibbon stated the Audit and Finance Committee met, but there was nothing to add to Ms. Bujimalla's financial report.

Legislative Committee Report

Commissioner Ash said the Legislative Committee met several times about Last-Dollar Scholarship program items. He asked Mr. Brown to elaborate.

Mr. Brown said the recommended action would authorize the Executive Director to initiate policy amendments to the Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship during the 2020 legislative session. Mr. Brown explained that the Last-Dollar Scholarship legislation became effective July 1, 2019. Through implementation of the scholarship, three prominent issues were identified for immediate action.

Mr. Brown said the first issue concerns mandatory prerequisite courses for eligible programs that prevent students from being considered for the scholarship as they are not considered enrolled in an eligible program as a new high school graduate.

Mr. Brown called the second issue a gap in eligibility. Students who graduated from high school in 2018, enrolled in an eligible program of study full-time during the 2018-19 academic year, and are still enrolled full-time in eligible programs during the 2019-20 academic year, are not eligible based on the current definition of eligibility for recent high school graduates.

Mr. Brown described the third amendment as allowing recent high school graduates enrolled part-time in an eligible program during the summer term to receive the Last-Dollar Scholarship.

If the Commission recommends these amendments, there will be one more review by the Legislative Services agency as the language is put into bill format for the 2020 Legislative Session.

Motion: Commissioner Putnam moved to authorize the Executive Director to initiate policy amendments to the Future Ready Iowa Last-Dollar Scholarship program during the 2020 legislative session.
Commissioner Ash seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Brown verified Senator Quirnbach's question if the yellow highlighted sections were the only proposed changes. Senator Quirnbach noted a definition for "adult learner" was needed and that the legislature needs to work to ensure 19-year-old learners gain eligibility. Commissioner Mulholland agreed the wording was not ideal but the recommendation needs to be put in motion.

Mr. Brown said the recommended action was to approve the Agency and Commission Board budget requests for FY2021. He explained the budget chart in the board book. He said the Department of Management recommended status quo budgets, though FY2020 expenditures for the two Future Ready Iowa programs were unknown. He said projections for those programs would be formulated later this fall.

Motion: Commissioner Putnam moved to approve the Agency and Commission Board budget requests for FY2021. Commissioner Bates seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Community Engagement Subcommittee Report

Commissioner Mulholland said the Community Engagement Subcommittee would meet following the Commission meeting and there was nothing more to report.

Board Structure Subcommittee Report

Commissioner Mulholland said the Board Structure Subcommittee did not meet and had no report.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Putnam discussed the tuition pricing structure change announcement at Central College. Senator Quirmbach asked about financial aid for low-income students. Commissioner Putnam replied they have maintained their scholarship profile. He said the emphasis shifted to need-based aid and that alumni continue to be generous, and that there is an increased expectation for philanthropic support. In response to a question from Senator Quirmbach, Commissioner Putnam verified that Central College will meet requirements to maintain eligibility for the Iowa Tuition Grant. Commissioner Mulholland thanked him for the update.

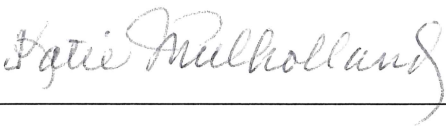
Senator Quirmbach offered the opportunity to view the movie "Failed State."
Commissioner Mulholland suggested a viewing be scheduled for a future date.

Commissioner Mulholland read a letter from Karen Misjak, announcing her retirement effective January 24, 2020. Commissioner Mulholland reviewed the meeting dates and determined the full board will meet in person on January 24, 2020.

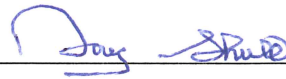
Commissioner Mulholland announced the position posted on September 20, 2019. She said the Human Resources Committee will meet to screen applications and conduct initial interviews. Commissioner Mulholland stated final interviews will be conducted during the November 15, 2019, Commission meeting.

Senator Quirmbach noted the nature and function of the Executive Director position has changed over the years.

The meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m.



Katie Mulholland, Chair



Doug Shull, Vice Chair